

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

unsophisticated eyes of Giovanni and Francesco, everything seemed ideal. " This Holy Father," they wrote to the Abbess and nuns of Santa Bonda, " is considered a good man, and we believe that God through him is working good and holy things. He has a brother who seems to us most holy and a good servant of God and right humble, and who keeps up his state unwillingly; he loves us right well; may Christ reward him and give him His grace. Think, Madonna and our mothers, that here is all the nobility of the world, with pomps and delights and goodly robes and lordship, and all lovely things and great are here. But, all the same, never was Poverty so dear to us as now, and never did she please us so." They were profoundly edified even by the papal courtiers. " You could not imagine how much virtue we find in these cardinals and in these great lords and many others, so much so that we are confounded at what they do. They have more humility in their great estate and in their vast wealth than we, poor and proud, in our vile and abject condition ; we make the show, and they do the deeds." Cardinal Anglico gave them a rule of life, "which pleases us much, and, with the grace of God, will please all, for it is the true way of salvation."¹ But they would accept no bulls or privileges of any kind from the Pope. Their friend, the Bishop of Citta di Castello, said to them : "Let virtues defend you, and not papal bulls."

With their order now confirmed, the seventy or more *poverelli* having doffed their rags and put on the new white and grey papal habit, Giovanni and Francesco left Viterbo towards the end of July. At Acquapendente, Giovanni fell ill. They tried to bring him back to Santa Bonda, but he died on the way at the abbey of San Salvatore on Monte Amiata, on the last day of July, 1367. He was buried in the church of the monastery of Santa Bonda. Fifteen days later, Francesco Vincenti followed him into the other world. Their order of the Gesuati, white-hooded and grey-gowned, lives now only on the canvasses of the painters of their native city.

One anxiety had clouded the last days of Giovanni's stay at ¹ *Lettgrt del B. Giovanni Cohmbml*, 90-93, 95, 108,